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Official Records

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New York

President: Mr. Jan Kavan ..... (Czech Republic)

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Item 10 of the provisional agenda

Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization (A/57/1)

The President: In accordance with the decision taken at its 1st plenary meeting, on 10 September 2002, the General Assembly will hear a presentation by the Secretary-General of his annual report on the work of the Organization.

I give the floor to the Secretary-General.

The Secretary-General: We cannot begin today without reflecting on yesterday's anniversary and on the criminal challenge so brutally thrown in our faces on 11 September 2001.

The terrorist attacks of that day were not an isolated event. They were an extreme example of a global scourge, which requires a broad, sustained and global response: broad, because terrorism can be defeated only if all nations unite against it; sustained, because the battle against terrorism will not be won easily or over night — it requires patience and persistence; and global, because terrorism is a widespread and complex phenomenon, with many deep roots and exacerbating factors.

I believe that such a response can succeed only if we make full use of multilateral institutions. I stand before you today as a multilateralist — by precedent, by principle, by Charter and by duty.

I also believe that every Government that is committed to the rule of law at home, must be committed also to the rule of law abroad. All States have a clear interest, as well as a clear responsibility, to uphold international law and maintain international order.

Our founding fathers, the statesmen of 1945, had learned that lesson from the bitter experience of two world wars and a great depression. They recognized that international security is not a zero-sum game. Peace, security and freedom are not finite commodities, like land, oil or gold, which one State can acquire at another's expense. On the contrary, the more peace, security and freedom any one State has, the more its neighbours are likely to have. And they recognized that, by agreeing to exercise sovereignty together, they could gain a hold over problems that would defeat any one of them acting separately. If those lessons were clear in 1945, should they not be much more so today, in the age of globalization?

On almost no item on our agenda does anyone seriously contend that each nation can fend for itself. Even the most powerful countries know that they need to work with others, in multilateral institutions, to achieve their aims. Only by multilateral action can we ensure that open markets offer benefits and opportunities to all. Only by multilateral action can we give people in the least developed countries the chance to escape the ugly misery of poverty, ignorance and disease. Only by multilateral action can we protect ourselves from acid rain or global warming, from the

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spread of HIV/AIDS, the illicit trade in drugs or the odious traffic in human beings.

That applies even more to the prevention of terrorism. Individual States may defend themselves by striking back at terrorist groups and at the countries that harbour or support them. But only concerted vigilance and cooperation among all States, with constant, systematic exchange of information, offer any real hope of denying terrorists their opportunities.

On all these matters, for any one State — large or small — choosing to follow or reject the multilateral path must not be a simple matter of political convenience. It has consequences far beyond the immediate context. When countries work together in multilateral institutions — developing, respecting, and when necessary enforcing international law — they also develop mutual trust and more effective cooperation on other issues.

The more a country makes use of multilateral institutions — thereby respecting shared values, and accepting the obligations and restraints inherent in those values — the more others will trust and respect it, and the stronger its chance to exercise true leadership.

And among multilateral institutions, this universal Organization has a special place. Any State, if attacked, retains the inherent right of self-defence under Article 51 of the Charter. But beyond that, when States decide to use force to deal with broader threats to international peace and security, there is no substitute for the unique legitimacy provided by the United Nations.

Member States attach importance — great importance in fact — to such legitimacy and to the international rule of law. They have shown — notably in the action to liberate Kuwait, 12 years ago — that they are willing to take action, under the authority of the Security Council, which they would not be willing to take without it.

The existence of an effective international security system depends on the Council's authority, and therefore on the Council having the political will to act, even in the most difficult cases, when agreement seems elusive at the outset. The primary criterion for putting an issue on the Council's agenda should not be the receptiveness of the parties, but the existence of a grave threat to world peace.

Let me now turn to four current threats to world peace where true leadership and effective action are badly needed.

The first is the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Recently, many of us have been struggling to reconcile Israel's legitimate security concerns with Palestinian humanitarian needs. But those limited objectives cannot be achieved in isolation from the wider political context. We must return to the search for a just and comprehensive solution, which alone can bring security and prosperity to both peoples, and indeed to the whole region.

The ultimate shape of a Middle East peace settlement is well known. It was defined long ago in Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), and its Israeli-Palestinian components were spelt out even more clearly in Council resolution 1397 (2002): land for peace; an end to terror and to occupation; two States, Israel and Palestine, living side by side within secure and recognized borders. Both parties accept that vision. But we can reach it only if we move rapidly and in parallel on all fronts. The so-called sequential approach has failed.

As we agreed at the "quartet" meeting in Washington last May, an international peace conference is needed without delay to set out a road map of parallel steps; steps to strengthen Israel's security, steps to strengthen Palestinian economic and political institutions, and steps to settle the details of the final peace agreement. Meanwhile, humanitarian steps to relieve Palestinian suffering must be intensified. The need is urgent.

Secondly, the leadership of Iraq continues to defy mandatory resolutions adopted by the Security Council under Chapter VII of the Charter. I have engaged Iraq in an in-depth discussion on a range of issues, including the need for arms inspectors to return, in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions.

Efforts to obtain Iraq's compliance with the Council's resolutions must continue. I appeal to all those who have influence with Iraq's leaders to impress on them the vital importance of accepting the weapons inspections. This is the indispensable first step towards assuring the world that all Iraq's weapons of mass destruction have indeed been eliminated, and — let me stress — towards the suspension and eventual ending

of the sanctions that are causing so many hardships for the Iraqi people.

I urge Iraq to comply with its obligations, for the sake of its own people and for the sake of world order. If Iraq's defiance continues, the Security Council must face its responsibilities.

Thirdly, permit me to press all of you, as leaders of the international community, to maintain your commitment to Afghanistan. I know I speak for all you in welcoming President Karzai to the Assembly and congratulating him on his escape from last week's vicious assassination attempt — a graphic reminder of how hard it is to uproot the remnants of terrorism in any country where it has taken root. It was the international community's shameful neglect of Afghanistan in the 1990s that allowed that country to slide into chaos, providing a fertile breeding ground for Al Qaeda.

Today, Afghanistan urgently needs help in two areas. The Government must be helped to extend its authority throughout the country. Without this, all else may fail. And donors must follow through on their commitments to help with rehabilitation, reconstruction and development. Otherwise the Afghan people will lose hope — and desperation, we know, breeds violence.

And finally, in South Asia the world has recently come closer than for many years past to a direct conflict between two countries with nuclear capability. The situation may now have calmed a little, but it remains perilous. The underlying causes must be addressed. If a fresh crisis erupts, the international community might have a role to play, though I gladly acknowledge — indeed, strongly welcome — the efforts made by well-placed Member States to help the two leaders find a solution.

Let me conclude by reminding Members of their pledge two years ago, at the Millennium Summit, to make the United Nations a more effective instrument in the service of the world's peoples. Today, I ask them to honour that pledge. Let us all recognize from now on — in each capital, in every nation, large and small — that the global interest is our national interest.

Agenda item 9

General debate

The President: I should like to remind members of General Assembly decision 56/468 of 1 May 2002, by which the Assembly decided that there would be a time limit of up to 15 minutes for each statement. Within this given time frame, I should like to appeal to speakers to deliver their statements at a normal speed so that interpretation may be provided properly.

I should also like to draw the General Assembly's attention to the decision taken by the Assembly at previous sessions, namely, that the practice of expressing congratulations inside the General Assembly Hall after a speech had been delivered was strongly discouraged. In this connection, I should like to suggest that speakers in the general debate, after delivering their statements, should leave the General Assembly Hall through room GA-200, located behind the podium, before returning to their seats.

May I take it that the General Assembly agrees to proceed in the same manner during the general debate of the fifty-seventh session?

It was so decided.

The President: I call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Brazil, His Excellency Mr. Celso Lafer.

Mr. Lafer (Brazil): I congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the presidency of the General Assembly. I thank your predecessor, Mr. Han Seung-soo, for the leadership he displayed at a particularly critical moment for the Organization.

To Secretary-General Kofi Annan, I reaffirm Brazil's confidence in his statesmanship.

I have the pleasure of greeting the entry of East Timor into the fold of the United Nations, just as we welcomed it last July in Brasilia into our Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries. A free Timor is a remarkable United Nations success story.

Brazil also welcomes Switzerland, as it has now become a full member of this global political forum.

I come to this Hall as the representative of a country that has faith in the United Nations and that views multilateralism as the guiding principle of relations among States. This is a conviction we hold dear at all times, good and bad. We are at a particularly

difficult juncture for the Organization. This moment calls for measures sustained by the principles and values on which the United Nations was founded. Brazil has defended them since the first international conferences of the twentieth century.

We have never let ourselves be tempted by the argument of power. Rather, we have been guided by the power of argument. This has been the foreign policy of President Fernando Henrique Cardoso. Throughout the eight years of the two terms of office to which he has been democratically elected, certain fundamental guidelines have been recurrent: fostering democratic decision-making; overcoming the governance deficit in international relations; designing a new financial architecture and providing effective solutions for volatility in capital flows; defending a multilateral trade regime that is both fair and balanced — hence, the importance of the World Trade Organization and of the Doha mandate; correcting the distortions resulting from economic globalization that is not accompanied by a corresponding process of political and institutional globalization; and affirming the value of human rights and sustainable development. These are challenges that we cannot face alone.

For this reason, President Fernando Henrique Cardoso has sought to strengthen the Common Market of the South, together with South American integration, as instruments for peace, cooperation and greater competitiveness among our countries. Similarly, President Cardoso has promoted the development of partnerships in all continents, pursuing well-balanced negotiations for the establishment of free trade areas, in particular with the European Union, as well as with the countries taking part in the Free Trade Area of the Americas process.

We are committed to seeing the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol and the establishment of the International Criminal Court; to furthering the social development agenda; and to moving forward on nuclear and conventional disarmament. The Brazilian vision of the world under the leadership of President Fernando Henrique Cardoso expresses goals not just of Government, but also of the entire country and society. That is why the electoral process now under way will further strengthen democracy in Brazil and highlight the country's international credentials.

Our commitment to the United Nations and to multilateralism will not waver "in times of storm and blustery winds", to quote Camões, the great poet of the Portuguese language. The greater the challenges, such as those facing us at this difficult juncture, the greater the need for answers grounded in legitimacy — legitimacy born of participation and consensus. Cooperation must be our modus operandi.

In the multilateral sphere, leadership is crucial to the tasks before us. We are clearly aware of that, yet the form and content of each task must be defined through dialogue. Only through dialogue will a coalition of truly united nations be built — nations united by the power of persuasion. The tangled interests that form a global web of interdependence can be managed only through authority rooted in multilateral institutions and in respect for international law. The commitment to negotiated settlements, under the aegis of multilateralism, must be upheld.

At the time of the 11 September terrorist attacks, this Organization immediately showed its solidarity with the United States of America by adopting resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council. At the regional level, the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance was invoked on a Brazilian initiative as an expression of our firm repudiation and condemnation of all barbaric acts of terrorism and of our solidarity with the United States. These responses have taken the form of renewed collaboration in security, intelligence, police and judicial cooperation issues.

Lasting solutions to terrorism, international drug-trafficking and organized crime require careful and persistent efforts to set up partnerships and cooperative arrangements consistent with the United Nations multilateral system.

Many countries and regions have been burdened with the costs of globalization, while at the same time being deprived of its benefits. The very same free flow of capital that can foster investment is responsible for speculative attacks against national currencies and balance of payment crises, with negative impact on the continuity of public policies and on the alleviation of social ills.

Protectionism and all forms of barriers to trade, both tariff and non-tariff, continue to suffocate developing economies and to nullify the competitiveness of their exports. Liberalization of the agricultural sector has been nothing more than a promise repeatedly put off to an uncertain future.

The globalization to which we aspire requires reform of economic and financial institutions. It must not be limited to the triumph of the market.

A modern understanding of development must encompass the protection of human rights, be they civil and political or economic, social and cultural. In this respect, the appointment of Sergio Vieira de Mello as the new United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights is a great honour for all Brazilians. He succeeds Mary Robinson, whose important achievements deserve recognition.

The United Nations was created to maintain peace and security. However, armed conflicts and pockets of irrational violence persist today.

The situation in the Middle East underscores how distant we still are from the international order imagined by the founders of the United Nations Charter.

Brazil supports the creation of a democratic, secure and economically viable Palestinian State, as well as the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination. Brazil defends the right of the State of Israel to exist within recognized borders and of its people to live in security. These are essential prerequisites for lasting peace in the Middle East. Only by mutually and comprehensively acknowledging the conflicting legitimacies in the region, as well as by building on existing agreements, can we staunch the indiscriminate destructiveness of violence and forge a way forward.

The use of force at the international level is admissible only once all diplomatic alternatives have been exhausted. Force must be exercised only in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and in a manner consistent with the determinations of the Security Council. Otherwise, the credibility of the Organization will be undermined in a way that will not only be illegitimate, but that will also give rise to situations of precarious and short-lived stability.

In the specific case of Iraq, Brazil believes that it is incumbent upon the Security Council to determine the measures necessary to ensure full compliance with relevant resolutions. The Security Council's exercise of its responsibilities is the way to reduce tensions and to avoid risking the unpredictable consequences resulting from wider instability.

In Angola the international community must support recent positive developments that open the way to the rebuilding of the country and the consolidation of peace and democracy.

Strengthening the system of collective security remains a challenge. The Security Council needs reform in order to enhance its legitimacy and lay the foundations for more solid international cooperation in building a just and stable international order. A central feature of this reform should be the expansion of the number of members, both in the permanent and non-permanent categories.

Brazil has already made it known — and I reaffirm it here — that it is ready to contribute to the work of the Security Council and to assume all its responsibilities.

For Brazil, the United Nations is the public space for the creation of power, which, according to Hannah Arendt, can result only from the human capacity to act in concert. The United Nations is the crucial hinge in creating a global governance focused on more equitable distribution of the dividends of peace and progress.

Therein lies our vision for the future, a vision of solidarity among peoples and nations, a vision made legitimate by renewed and inclusive understanding of power.

We are inspired by the observation of Guicciardini, the politically more successful Florentine contemporary of Machiavelli: "Among men, hope is normally more powerful than fear".

Address by Mr. George W. Bush, President of the United States of America

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the United States of America.

Mr. George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, and to invite him to address the General Assembly.

President Bush: We meet one year and one day after a terrorist attack brought grief to my country and brought grief to many citizens of our world. Yesterday, we remembered the innocent lives taken that terrible morning. Today we turn to the urgent duty of protecting other lives without illusion and without fear.

We have accomplished much in the last year — in Afghanistan and beyond. We have much yet to do — in Afghanistan and beyond. Many nations represented here have joined in the fight against global terror, and the people of the United States are grateful.

The United Nations was born in the hope that survived a world war — the hope of a world moving towards justice, escaping old patterns of conflict and fear. The founding Members resolved that the peace of the world must never again be destroyed by the will and the wickedness of any man. We created the United Nations Security Council so that, unlike the League of Nations, our deliberations would be more than talk, our resolutions would be more than wishes. After generations of deceitful dictators, broken treaties and squandered lives, we dedicated ourselves to standards of human dignity, shared by all, and to a system of security defended by all.

Today, these standards, and this security, are challenged.

Our commitment to human dignity is challenged by persistent poverty and raging disease. The suffering is great, and our responsibilities are clear. The United States is joining with the world to supply aid where it reaches people and lifts up lives, to extend trade and the prosperity it brings, and to bring medical care where it is desperately needed.

As a symbol of our commitment to human dignity, the United States will return to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). This organization has been reformed, and America will participate fully in its mission to advance human rights, tolerance and learning.

Our common security is challenged by regional conflicts — ethnic and religious strife that is ancient, but not inevitable. In the Middle East, there can be no peace for either side without freedom for both sides. America stands committed to an independent and democratic Palestine, living side by side with Israel in peace and security. Like all other people, Palestinians deserve a government that serves their interests and listens to their voices. My nation will continue to encourage all parties to step up to their responsibilities as we seek a just and comprehensive settlement to the conflict.

Above all, our principles and our security are challenged today by outlaw groups and regimes that accept no law of morality and have no limit to their violent ambitions. In the attacks on America a year ago, we saw the destructive intentions of our enemies. This threat hides within many nations, including my own. In cells and camps, terrorists are plotting further destruction and are building new bases for their war against civilization. And our greatest fear is that terrorists will find a shortcut to their mad ambitions when an outlaw regime supplies them with the technologies enabling them to kill on a massive scale.

In one place, in one regime, we find all these dangers, in their most lethal and aggressive forms — exactly the kind of aggressive threat the United Nations was born to confront. Twelve years ago, Iraq invaded Kuwait without provocation. And the regime's forces were poised to continue their march to seize other countries and their resources. Had Saddam Hussein been appeased instead of stopped, he would have endangered the peace and stability of the world. Yet, this aggression was stopped by the might of coalition forces and the will of the United Nations.

In order to suspend hostilities and to spare himself, Iraq's dictator accepted a series of commitments. The terms were clear to him, and to all. And he agreed to prove that he is complying with every one of those obligations. He has proven instead only his contempt for the United Nations and for all his pledges. By breaking every pledge, by his deceptions and by his cruelties, Saddam Hussein has made the case against himself.

In 1991, Security Council resolution 688 (1991) demanded that the Iraqi regime cease at once the repression of its own people, including the systematic repression of minorities, which the Council said, "threaten[ed] international peace and security in the region".

This demand goes ignored. Last year, the United Nations Commission on Human Rights found that Iraq continues to commit extremely grave violations of human rights and that the regime's repression is all pervasive. Tens of thousands of political opponents and

ordinary citizens have been subjected to arbitrary arrest and imprisonment, summary execution, and torture by beating, burning, electric shock, starvation, mutilation and rape. Wives are tortured in front of their husbands; children in the presence of their parents; and all of these horrors are concealed from the world by the apparatus of a totalitarian State.

In 1991, the United Nations Security Council, through its resolutions 686 (1991) and 687 (1991), demanded that Iraq return all prisoners from Kuwait and other lands. Iraq's regime agreed. It broke this promise. Last year the Secretary-General's high-level coordinator for this issue reported that Kuwaiti, Saudi, Indian, Syrian, Lebanese, Iranian, Egyptian, Bahraini, and Omani nationals remain unaccounted for — more than 600 people. One American pilot is among them.

In 1991, the United Nations Security Council, through resolution 687 (1991), demanded that Iraq renounce all involvement with terrorism and permit no terrorist organizations to operate in Iraq. Iraq's regime agreed. It broke this promise. In violation of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), Iraq continues to shelter and support terrorist organizations that direct violence against Iran, Israel, and Western Governments. Iraqi dissidents abroad are targeted for murder. In 1993, Iraq attempted to assassinate the Emir of Kuwait and a former American President. Iraq's Government openly praised the attacks of 11 September. Al-Qaida terrorists have escaped from Afghanistan and are known to be in Iraq.

In 1991, the Iraqi regime agreed to destroy and to stop developing all weapons of mass destruction and long-range missiles, and to prove to the world it has done so by complying with rigorous inspections. Iraq has broken every aspect of this fundamental pledge.

From 1991 to 1995, the Iraqi regime said it had no biological weapons. After a senior official in its weapons program defected and exposed this lie, the regime admitted to producing tens of thousands of litres of anthrax and other deadly biological agents for use in Scud missile warheads, aerial bombs and aircraft spray tanks. United Nations inspectors believe Iraq has produced two to four times the amount of biological agents it declared and has failed to account for more than three metric tons of material that could be used to produce biological weapons. Right now, Iraq is expanding and improving facilities that were used for the production of biological weapons.

United Nations inspections also reveal that Iraq likely maintains stockpiles of VX, mustard and other chemical agents, and that the regime is rebuilding and expanding facilities capable of producing chemical weapons.

And in 1995, after four years of deception, Iraq finally admitted that it had had a crash nuclear weapons programme prior to the Gulf war. We know now that, were it not for that war, the regime in Iraq would likely have possessed a nuclear weapon no later than 1993.

Today, Iraq continues to withhold important information about its nuclear programme: weapons design, procurement logs, experiment data, an accounting of nuclear materials and documentation of foreign assistance. Iraq employs capable nuclear scientists and technicians. It retains physical infrastructure needed to build a nuclear weapon. Iraq has made several attempts to buy high-strength aluminium tubes used to enrich uranium for a nuclear weapon. Should Iraq acquire fissile material, it would be able to build a nuclear weapon within a year. And Iraq's State-controlled media have reported numerous meetings between Saddam Hussein and his nuclear scientists, leaving little doubt about his continued appetite for these weapons.

Iraq also possesses a force of Scud-type missiles with ranges beyond the 150 kilometres permitted by the United Nations. Work at testing and production facilities shows that Iraq is building more long-range missiles that can inflict mass death throughout the region.

In 1990, after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, the world imposed economic sanctions on Iraq. Those sanctions were maintained after the war to compel the regime's compliance with Security Council resolutions. In time, Iraq was allowed to use oil revenues to buy food. Saddam Hussein has subverted that programme, working around the sanctions to buy missile technology and military materials. He blames the suffering of Iraq's people on the United Nations, even as he uses his oil wealth to build lavish palaces for himself and to buy arms for his country. By refusing to comply with his own agreements, he bears full guilt for the hunger and misery of innocent Iraqi citizens.

In 1991, Iraq promised United Nations inspectors immediate and unrestricted access to verify Iraq's commitment to rid itself of weapons of mass

destruction and long-range missiles. Iraq broke that promise, spending seven years deceiving, evading and harassing United Nations inspectors before ceasing cooperation entirely. Just months after the 1991 ceasefire, the Security Council twice renewed its demand that the Iraqi regime cooperate fully with inspectors, condemning Iraq's serious violations of its obligations. The Security Council again renewed that demand in 1994 and twice more in 1996, deploring Iraq's clear violations of its obligations. The Security Council renewed its demand three more times in 1997, citing flagrant violations, and three more times in 1998, calling Iraq's behaviour totally unacceptable. And in 1999, the demand was renewed yet again.

As we meet today, it has been almost four years since the last United Nations inspector set foot in Iraq — four years for the Iraqi regime to plan and to build and to test behind the cloak of secrecy. We know that Saddam Hussein pursued weapons of mass murder even when inspectors were in his country. Are we to assume that he stopped when they left? The history, the logic and the facts lead to one conclusion. Saddam Hussein's regime is a grave and gathering danger. To suggest otherwise is to hope against the evidence. To assume this regime's good faith is to bet the lives of millions and the peace of the world in a reckless gamble. And that is a risk we must not take.

We have been more than patient. We have tried sanctions. We have tried the carrot of oil-for-food and the stick of coalition military strikes. But Saddam Hussein has defied all those efforts and continues to develop weapons of mass destruction. The first time we may be completely certain he has nuclear weapons is when, God forbid, he uses one. We owe it to all our citizens to do everything in our power to prevent that day from coming.

The conduct of the Iraqi regime is a threat to the authority of the United Nations and a threat to peace. Iraq has answered a decade of United Nations demands with a decade of defiance. All the world now faces a test and the United Nations a difficult and defining moment. Are Security Council resolutions to be honoured and enforced or cast aside without consequence? Will the United Nations serve the purpose of its founding, or will it be irrelevant?

The United States helped found the United Nations. We want the United Nations to be effective and respected and successful. We want the resolutions of the world's most important multilateral body to be enforced, and right now those resolutions are being unilaterally subverted by the Iraqi regime. Our partnership of nations can meet the test before us by making clear what we now expect of the Iraqi regime.

If the Iraqi regime wishes peace, it will immediately and unconditionally forswear, disclose and remove or destroy all weapons of mass destruction, long-range missiles and all related material.

If the Iraqi regime wishes peace, it will immediately end all support for terrorism and act to suppress it, as all States are required to do by Security Council resolutions.

If the Iraqi regime wishes peace, it will cease persecution of its civilian population, including Shia, Sunnis, Kurds, Turkomans and others — again, as required by Security Council resolutions.

If the Iraqi regime wishes peace, it will release or account for all Gulf war personnel whose fate is still unknown. It will return the remains of any who are deceased, return stolen property, accept liability for losses resulting from the invasion of Kuwait and fully cooperate with international efforts to resolve those issues, as required by Security Council resolutions.

If the Iraqi regime wishes peace, it will immediately end all illicit trade outside the oil-for-food programme. It will accept United Nations administration of funds from that programme, to ensure that the money is used fairly and promptly for the benefit of the Iraqi people.

If all those steps are taken, it will signal a new openness and accountability in Iraq. And it could open the prospect of the United Nations helping to build a Government that represents all Iraqis — a Government based on respect for human rights, economic liberty and internationally supervised elections.

The United States has no quarrel with the Iraqi people. They have suffered too long in silent captivity. Liberty for the Iraqi people is a great moral cause and a great strategic goal. The people of Iraq deserve it. The security of all nations requires it.

Free societies do not intimidate through cruelty and conquest, and open societies do not threaten the world with mass murder. The United States supports political and economic liberty in a unified Iraq.

We can harbour no illusions, and that is important today to remember. Saddam Hussein attacked Iran in 1980 and Kuwait in 1990. He has fired ballistic missiles at Iran and Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Israel. His regime once ordered the killing of every person between the ages of 15 and 70 in certain Kurdish villages in northern Iraq. He has gassed many Iranians and 40 Iraqi villages.

My nation will work with the Security Council to meet our common challenge. If Iraq's regime defies us again, the world must move deliberately and decisively to hold Iraq to account. We will work with the Security Council for the necessary resolutions. But the purposes of the United States should not be doubted. The Security Council resolutions will be enforced, and the just demands of peace and security will be met, or action will be unavoidable, and a regime that has lost its legitimacy will also lose its power.

Events can turn in one of two ways.

If we fail to act in the face of danger, the people of Iraq will continue to live in brutal submission. The regime will have new power to bully, dominate and conquer its neighbours, condemning the Middle East to more years of bloodshed and fear. The region will remain unstable, with little hope of freedom, and isolated from the progress of our times. With every step the Iraqi regime takes towards gaining and deploying the most terrible weapons, our own options to confront that regime will narrow. And if an emboldened regime were to supply these weapons to terrorist allies, then the attacks of 11 September would be a prelude to far greater horrors.

If we meet our responsibilities, if we overcome this danger, we can arrive at a very different future. The people of Iraq can shake off their captivity. They can one day join a democratic Afghanistan and a democratic Palestine, inspiring reforms throughout the Muslim world. These nations can show by their example that honest government, respect for women, and the great Islamic tradition of learning can triumph in the Middle East and beyond. We will show that the promise of the United Nations can be fulfilled in our time.

Neither of these outcomes is certain. Both have been set before us. We must choose between a world of fear and a world of progress. We cannot stand by and do nothing while dangers gather. We must stand up for our security and for the permanent rights and hopes of mankind. By heritage and by choice, the United States of America will make that stand. Representatives to the United Nations have the power to make that stand as well.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the United States of America for the statement he has just made.

Mr. George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Thabo Mbeki, President of the Republic of South Africa

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of South Africa.

Mr. Thabo Mbeki, President of the Republic of South Africa, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Thabo Mbeki, President of the Republic of South Africa, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Mbeki: I would like to join in thanking the outgoing President of the General Assembly for the diligent manner in which he managed the affairs of the Assembly. I would also like to congratulate you, Mr. President, for taking over the leadership of the Assembly at its fifty-seventh session. We hope that you will have a successful tenure in your stewardship of this important body.

Allow us to also welcome Switzerland and East Timor to membership of the United Nations.

Two years ago, the world's political leaders met at this place and, through the historic United Nations Millennium Declaration, reaffirmed our faith in the United Nations Organization and its Charter as indispensable foundations of a more peaceful, prosperous and just world. That an unprecedented number of heads of State and Government had gathered at the United Nations to make that commitment to cooperation among the peoples of the world — to peace, prosperity and justice throughout our universe — gave hope to the billions throughout the world who know the painful meaning of oppression by

another, of war and violent conflict, of poverty and injustice.

None of those who spoke from this podium knew that a year after they had pledged to use their energies and talents to provide a meaningful life for all, peace in this country and the rest of the world would be brutally challenged by the murderous terrorist attack of 11 September. We meet a day after the anniversary of that fateful 11 September. We have a collective duty to reaffirm our united resolve to create a world free of the fear of terrorism. We have a common task to ensure that this Organization truly lives up to its obligations to do all the things that make for peace. We have a solemn obligation to give real meaning to the message of hope we proclaimed in the Millennium Declaration. It may be that future generations will say that if we have learned anything at all from the horrendous events of 11 September, it is that the General Assembly should dedicate its efforts to the accomplishment of these tasks.

In keeping with that perspective, we have come to the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly to report that the peoples of Africa have risen to those challenges by forming the African Union. Our Union is based on the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. It results from the transformation of the Organization of African Unity, which championed the cause of the unity and independence of Africa for nearly 40 years. The African Union is Africa's practical and determined response to its past and present, in favour of peace and stability, democracy and human rights, cooperation, development, prosperity and human dignity. Its programme for the socio-economic revitalization of our continent is the New Partnership for Africa's Development, which must help us to eradicate poverty and underdevelopment throughout Africa and, within the context of the African Union, end Africa's humiliation as an object of charity.

Clearly, the objectives of the African Union and the programme enunciated in the New Partnership essentially, and of necessity, seek to advance the aims contained in the Millennium Development Goals. Naturally, the United Nations — as an Organization seized of the task to address the critical issues of peace, human rights and poverty eradication within the framework of sustainable development — will forever be central to the success of the African Union and the accomplishment of the goals of the New Partnership for Africa's Development. Accordingly, on behalf of the united peoples of Africa, we are honoured and privileged to commend to this Organization both the African Union and the New Partnership for Africa's Development. We are convinced that with the support of the United Nations, we will transform this into an African century.

We are happy that there are encouraging peace processes in Angola, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Sudan, with the Comoros already having held successful elections. We are particularly pleased because these positive developments will create the possibility for millions of our fellow Africans to reaffirm the sanctity of human life and security and to engage in the important tasks of rebuilding their countries to bring about a better life for all.

As part of our commitment to wage a sustained struggle to realize the long-deferred hopes of the peoples of Africa, we have agreed to the establishment of various institutions, including a peer-review mechanism, which must help us ensure that we honour our commitments to democracy, human rights and good governance. I am confident that the United Nations will work closely with the African Union and that this premier Organization of the peoples of the world will use its vast and invaluable experience to ensure that the African Union delivers on the important and pressing duty of achieving sustainable development in each and every country on our continent.

Together, the agencies of the United Nations and the organs of the African Union must give priority to such matters as human resources development and capacity-building, modernizing Africa's economy, dealing decisively with the intolerable debt burden, ensuring access of our products to the markets of the developed world, spreading the emancipation and empowerment of women, combating communicable and other diseases — including AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis — and fighting against environmental degradation.

At the end of August and the beginning of this month, the people of South Africa and Africa were honoured to host the World Summit for Sustainable Development. A number of far-reaching decisions were taken at that important Summit to ensure that we will bequeath to the next generations a better, humane and equitable world based on what we agree are the

inseparable pillars of sustainable development: economic development, social development and environmental protection. Delegates from around the world enshrined the decisions they took in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development to ensure that the billions of people who have placed their fate on our collective shoulders have a concrete programme of action to realize the goals contained in Agenda 21 and other documents adopted by the world community of nations during the last 10 years.

The Johannesburg Summit confronted the stark reality that billions of people across the world are poor, and it boldly confirmed the need for us to collaborate for a shared human prosperity through sustainable development. We agree that this goal can be achieved because we are inspired by the knowledge that the resources needed exist within the global community. Indeed, Member States have already committed themselves to make available the means necessary for the implementation of our plans, especially finance, technology and capacity-building.

It is critically important that we implement everything we agreed, acting with the necessary sense of urgency. Again, this we will do together, under the leadership of the United Nations, while we continue to strengthen the multilateral system of global governance as the only viable international response to all our challenges. Fundamentally, this is the only credible response to the challenge of globalization and the need to enhance human solidarity to meet our common needs.

It has been our privilege to chair the Non-Aligned Movement for the past four years. During that time, the Movement has ensured constant dialogue between the countries of the North and South, which has advanced the commonality of interest between States, confirming the view that the future of all humanity is interlinked. We are pleased that the views of the Movement have helped to inform the advance towards a better life for all, to which we have all committed ourselves by word and deed.

In February next year, Malaysia will assume the responsibility of guiding our Movement as it responds to the changed and changing global environment. I am certain that this will add new strength to the Non-Aligned Movement in the interests of all humanity, especially the poor of the world. As before, the Non-Aligned Movement is committed to the peaceful resolution of all conflicts, including those pertaining to Palestine and Israel, as well as Iraq, in keeping with the resolutions of the United Nations. These are urgent tasks to which the Organization must respond.

In conclusion, let me recall that two years ago in the Millennium Declaration more than 150 heads of State or Government resolved that "we believe that the central challenge we face today is to ensure that globalization becomes a positive force for all the world's people" (*resolution 55/2, para. 5*). Through both our global and our regional programmes we can and must ensure that globalization indeed becomes a valuable process which will bring about sustainable development and prosperity for all.

From this fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly must surely issue the unequivocal message that the peoples of the world are united in their resolve to sustain the message of hope by advancing the goals of peace, of democracy, of prosperity and of sustainable development.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of South Africa for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Thabo Mbeki, President of the Republic of South Africa, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Alejandro Toledo Manrique, President of the Republic of Peru

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Peru.

Mr. Alejandro Toledo Manrique, President of the Republic of Peru, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Alejandro Toledo Manrique, President of the Republic of Peru, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Toledo (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. President, may I first of all congratulate you on your election to an office of high responsibility in the United Nations. The best wishes of the Peruvian people and their Government go also to the delegations gathered here for an event that coincides with our

commemoration of the sad moments that one year ago put to the test the feelings and solidarity of humankind.

Human beings cannot and must not, either as individuals or as a species, cease their efforts to make history rational. Because it is that effort to give a sense of freedom and justice to collective living that alone can humanize life.

As President of Peru I reaffirm from this rostrum the commitment of the Government and the people of Peru to the international community to fight resolutely in favour of democracy and international security, which my country considers fundamental to human development.

The world has put an enormous challenge before us, the challenge of globalizing security. Without that security our economies cannot grow and our nations cannot develop socially, for it is clear that global insecurity conspires against the poor.

For that same reason, and driven by our democratic convictions, I wish to reaffirm here, without ambiguity, my firm condemnation of the insanity of the terrorist attacks perpetrated against the people of the United States on 11 September 2001, and to reaffirm the solidarity of the Peruvian people and Government to our friend the United States of America. My Government will continue to support the international community's efforts to confront, always within the framework of international law, the cruel and irrational ravages of international terrorism.

In that regard, Peru pledges before this Assembly to continue to cooperate with the Security Council's Counter-Terrorism Committee by making available the experts it needs in order to counter with intelligence and resolve the threats and acts of international terrorism, consistent with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and Security Council resolutions.

We are convinced that our nations must weave a vast network of commitments if we are to cooperate effectively in all fields in order to defeat terrorism. Peace, democracy and human rights, along with freedom of expression, are the concepts that must be given priority in the process of globalization. And to that end, Peru supports every effort to reach a consensus in the negotiation of a draft comprehensive convention against terrorism.

Peru is a party to 12 United Nations conventions which relate to the fight against terrorism and, in that regard, we call upon those States that have not yet done so to sign and ratify these conventions. I refer in particular to the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism and the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings. That would be a decisive step towards the eradication of this scourge, which threatens peace, security and democracy, creating instability and jeopardizing the development of our peoples.

We make this appeal from the perspective of a country that lived for more than 20 years with the violence of terrorism, which took more than 20,000 lives and cost billions of dollars in material losses.

Peace is not just a beautiful sentiment; it is the principal value shared by peoples and a prerequisite for the development of our nations. On the basis of that conviction, our Government is promoting, as one of the main pillars of its foreign policy, a limit on military expenditure at the regional level, with a view to freeing up resources for social investment and to combating want and abject poverty.

My country's commitment goes beyond mere words. In 2002, consistent with our proposals, we have taken the decision to reduce our military expenditure by 20 per cent and to redirect the resources to health, nutrition and education. I am pleased to be able to say that we have made progress in this respect, and we are gratified by our recent achievements in this area with our fraternal country Chile.

Today more than ever, Peru would like to reaffirm, before the international community, that is it committed to the building of a participatory and efficient system of collective security. To this end, we are promoting the adoption of the Andean Charter for Peace and Security, which was approved in June by the ministers of foreign affairs and defence of the Andean Community. Its resolute goal is to begin to formulate a community policy of security and confidence-building, establish an Andean zone of peace, improve and expand confidence-building measures and thus reduce the resources that are currently allocated to defence.

Peru is pleased to announce that, in compliance with its commitments under the Ottawa Convention, it has completed the process of destroying its arsenals of anti-personnel mines. It is currently conducting its largest demining operation to date, to reduce mines in border regions, as part of an agreement signed in 1998 with the fraternal country Ecuador.

In the same context, our Government reaffirms and renews its commitment to the creation of a South American peace and cooperation zone, as declared in Guayaquil, Ecuador, on 27 July, during a meeting of South American heads of State or Government. We propose the inclusion in the agenda of the General Assembly of an item on the South American peace and cooperation zone and will encourage the adoption of a draft resolution in that regard.

With regard of the promotion of democracy, Peru is today endeavouring fully to re-establish the freedoms of its citizenry, strengthen its democratic institutions and resolutely fight against corruption. Our Government has begun this task with full respect for democratic values, as well as for the independence of the branches of State power. I would also like to emphasize the efforts that we have been making to consolidate our democracy through mechanisms of coordination and political and social dialogue.

In July, my Government, the political parties, the business sector, workers, churches and other civil society organizations signed a national accord that contains 29 long-term State policies to be implemented by the current and future Governments over the next 20 years. This accord has characteristics that are unique in the history of Peru, since for the first time various political institutions and representatives of civil society met and together committed themselves to continuity in State policies in the areas of democracy, equality, social justice, competitiveness and transparency in political affairs.

Likewise, I would like to emphasize the signing, at Peru's initiative, of the Inter-American Democratic Charter, adopted by the Organization of American States on 11 September 2001. The Charter is an effective means of making the principles, norms and mechanisms of collective action consistent throughout the region. That system includes sanctions, to be applied in cases of violations or breaches of democratic institutions, with a view to promoting, preserving and defending democracy in the Latin America.

In the framework of the United Nations, we also encouraged the adoption by the Commission on Human Rights of a draft resolution entitled "Further measures to promote and consolidate democracy", which set out, for the first time within the United Nations system, a set of criteria to determine whether or not a regime is democratic. It includes so-called democratic clauses and legitimizes collective action for the protection and defence of democracy.

From another perspective, and bearing in mind the objective of peace, the Government of Peru believes that building peace and good governance is a vital prerequisite for the preservation of liberty and the attainment of mutual and more equitable development.

In that regard, Peru is aware of the urgent need for multilateral efforts — particularly by the richest countries — to strengthen democracy. That is why we reiterate our proposal to create a mechanism of financial solidarity for the defence of democracy and good governance.

The time has come to be creative — to create a mechanism for the financing of good governance and democracy among our peoples. We have said that democracy is costly. But democracy is a value that transcends the vote, the ballot box and the institutions of the State. It is founded on the deepest aspirations of the majority of our peoples, who are seeking their own development.

For that same reason, emerging democracies, which are today plagued by instability and uncertainty, urgently require new resources to facilitate public investment in the economies of the region aimed at re-energizing them, generating employment and protecting them from adverse financial shock. We are at a crossroads of Wall Street and Main Street, where we must resolve the problems of our economies and yet listen to the voices of our peoples demanding that their just aspirations be met. Our proposal, which we are taking from door to door, forum to forum, and soul to soul, is based on the conviction that Peruvian democracy is not an island in Latin America and the world, and cannot therefore be evaluated in isolation from global realities. We must insert Peru and Latin America in an interconnected world. We state this with the firm conviction that what is at stake is more than Peru's democracy but rather the democracy of a system that has proven to be the best.

My government, as I announced on the day when I took office, wishes to be remembered in history as one that, with full respect for democracy and all the fundamental freedoms of men and women, strengthened the development of Peru through productive and dignified work and through the courage to invest more in better nutrition, health and education. For this will be the best way to overcome the poverty

of nations. We are committed to facing the great problems and challenges of our time by building democracy in a world that is more just and has greater solidarity.

Today, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, international democracy has a name: the United Nations. If the United Nations is weak, then it must be strengthened; if it is slow, it must be given the means to act with greater effectiveness and speed. But we cannot do without the framework of the United Nations.

Peru is firmly committed to policies and values that support sustainable development. I am pleased in this regard to announce that today I shall be depositing with the Secretary-General the instrument through which Peru reaffirms the Kyoto Protocol. I call upon all other members of the international community that have not yet done so to ratify that international instrument in order to stem and reduce gas emissions that harm our nations. This also relates to the phenomenon of El Niño, which has been afflicting Peru and the countries of the Pacific with increasing frequency and intensity.

I wish to reiterate the firm commitment of Peru, first of all, to cooperate with all States in the international fight against terrorism; secondly, to work for peace and development, maintaining our proposal to limit military expenditures in South America and instead to dedicate those resources to the fight against poverty; and thirdly, to strengthen international support for democracy and good governance as an important step in the battle that we are waging against poverty and extreme poverty in our nations.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Peru for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Toledo, President of the Republic of Peru, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by General Pervez Musharraf, President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

General Pervez Musharraf, President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency General Pervez Musharraf, the President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

General Musharraf: I extend to you, Mr. President, my felicitations on your election. I also congratulate your predecessor, Dr. Han Seung-soo, for his able stewardship of the preceding session of the General Assembly.

We commend Secretary-General Kofi Annan for his commitment and dedicated efforts in the pursuit of the Charter's purposes and principles. I also congratulate Switzerland and East Timor on their admission as members of the United Nations.

Last year, this Assembly met under the shadow of the terrorist attacks on New York, our host city. The horror of that day galvanized the international community to combat this modern day evil which threatens to destabilize our societies.

Pakistan is in the forefront of the fight against terrorism. We have made major sacrifices in this war. We have interdicted infiltration by Al-Qaida into Pakistan. We have arrested and deported foreign suspects found on our territory. We are determined not to allow anyone to use our soil for terrorist acts inside or outside Pakistan.

However, some quarters are unfortunately utilizing the war against terrorism as a vehicle to spread hatred against Islam and Muslims. Terrorism has neither creed nor religion. In a globalized world, religious and cultural diversity should be a vehicle for complementary creativity and dynamism, not the rationale for a new ideological or political confrontation. A sustained dialogue between the Islamic and Western nations is essential to remove the veil of ignorance and prejudice and to promote harmony and cooperation. As a first step, may I propose that the General Assembly consider the adoption of a declaration on religious and cultural understanding, harmony and cooperation.

There is a need to address the root causes of terrorism. It is not religion which impels a terrorist act; it is often a sense of frustration and powerlessness to redress persistent injustices. When a people's right to self-determination and freedom are brutally suppressed by foreign occupation, they may be driven to put up

resistance by all means. Terrorist attacks must be condemned, but acts of terrorism by individuals or groups cannot be the justification to outlaw the just struggle of a people for self-determination and liberation from colonial or foreign occupation, nor can it justify state terrorism.

Misusing the rationale of war against terrorism, India has sought to delegitimize the Kashmiri freedom struggle, tarnish Pakistan with the brush of terrorism and drive a wedge between Pakistan and its coalition partners. Boasting of its coercive capability, India has deployed about a million troops in battle formation against Pakistan. Such threatening and aggressive posturing will not resolve disputes. We in Pakistan cannot be coerced or frightened into compromising our principled position on Kashmir.

The conflict in occupied Kashmir is being waged by the Kashmiris themselves. No amount of external assistance could have inspired the Kashmiri people to sacrifice the lives of 80,000 of their youth and to sustain their struggle for decades against India's occupation army.

India's planned elections in Kashmir will once again be rigged. Such elections, under Indian occupation, will not help peace. They may set it back, in fact. The people of Jammu and Kashmir must be allowed to exercise their right to determine their own future in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the Security Council.

Despite India's provocations and threats over the past year, Pakistan has acted with restraint and responsibility. We have advanced several peace proposals. They have all been spurned by India. Let me declare from this rostrum: Pakistan will not start a conflict with India. But let me also declare that, if war is thrust upon us, we shall exercise our right to self-defence fully and very effectively.

Today, peace in South Asia is hostage to one accident, one act of terrorism, one strategic miscalculation by India. In this dangerous situation, crisis management should not be allowed to become a substitute for conflict resolution. The steps required to avoid a conflict and advance peace in South Asia are clear: first, mutual withdrawal of forward-deployed forces by both States; secondly, observance of a ceasefire along the Line of Control in Kashmir; and, finally, cessation of India's state terrorism against the Kashmiri people. Simultaneously to all this, a dialogue must be resumed between India and Pakistan. The structure for such a dialogue was agreed between Prime Minister Vajpayee and myself at Agra. The Kashmiris should be fully associated with the dialogue on Kashmir and should be allowed to travel freely to Pakistan and Azad Kashmir.

To ensure sustainable peace and stability in South Asia, a Kashmir solution should be accompanied by agreed measures for nuclear restraint and a conventional arms balance between India and Pakistan. India's ongoing massive military build-up reflects its known desire for domination over South Asia and the Indian Ocean. In the interest of regional and global stability, this must be discouraged.

India's belligerence also reflects the chauvinistic ideology of the Hindu extremist parties and organizations. Rising Hindu fanaticism in India has targeted Muslims, Christians, Sikhs and even the scheduled-caste Hindus. Last February, an estimated 2,000 innocent Muslims were massacred and burned alive in Gujarat with the complicity of the Bharatiya Janata Party's state leaders. There must be accountability for this massacre. The international community must act to oppose extremism in India with the same determination it has displayed in combating terrorism, religious bigotry, ethnic cleansing and fascist tendencies elsewhere in the world.

Even as Hindu fundamentalism is rising in India, Pakistan is waging a successful struggle to restore its traditions of a tolerant Islam. We are acting vigorously to eradicate the sad legacy of the Afghanistan war: religious extremism, drugs and guns. We in Pakistan are determined to transform into reality the vision of our founding father, the Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah, for a progressive, modern, democratic Islamic State. We wish to play a constructive role in promoting peace and prosperity in South Asia, Central Asia and the Gulf region.

In three short years, my Government has laid the foundations of sustainable development and sustainable democracy in Pakistan. We have empowered the people by devolving decision-making to the grass-roots level. We have improved human rights, virtually eliminated exploitive child labour and empowered the women of Pakistan. We have rationalized economic policies and, despite internal and external shocks, set Pakistan on the path of sustained economic growth. Pakistan has also become the first country to set up a human

development fund, with the collaboration of the United Nations Development Programme, and a national volunteers corps for the achievement of the millennium goals of poverty alleviation and human development. In 30 days, we will hold national, provincial and Senate elections, completing the process of restoring true democracy in Pakistan.

We in Pakistan remain extremely happy with the positive changes in Afghanistan after two decades of conflict. We fully support President Hamid Karzai. We appreciate the efforts of the Secretary-General and his Special Representative, Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, to bring hope and peace to the long-suffering Afghan people. We believe that faithful implementation of the Bonn process and the Tokyo commitments is essential for success. Ensuring credible security in Kabul and other centres is of paramount importance. This was brought home by the attempt made a few days ago to assassinate President Karzai.

The international community must urgently revive the Middle East peace process also to realize a comprehensive and just peace on the basis of Security Council resolutions and the principle of land for peace.

Pakistan supports the full and faithful implementation of all Security Council resolutions.

In our globalizing yet divided world, the most important war we must fight is the war against poverty. The objectives of this war have been identified — at the Millennium Summit, at Doha, Monterrey and Johannesburg. We must implement the commitments made in an integrated and coherent manner.

Let me state here that a pernicious aspect of the international banking system is the stashing away in secret accounts in developed countries of money acquired illegally by corrupt elite from developing countries. An international regime to interdict and return illegally acquired wealth to the developing countries will make a genuine contribution to the reduction of corruption and poverty alleviation in those countries.

Despite current differences among Governments, people from both rich and poor nations are beginning to embrace universal values and common goals: avoiding war; ending poverty, hunger, disease, discrimination and human rights violations; promoting democracy; sharing technology; creating decent work for all; and protecting the environment. We must capture this growing spirit of global humanism to advance the quest for global prosperity and universal peace. This can be accomplished only by the United Nations.

Our decisions and actions today will shape events of the future. We must rid ourselves of forces of intolerance and radicalism. We have to create a safer world for our future generations — a world of peace and conciliation, not one of conflict and tension.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan for the statement he has just made.

General Pervez Musharraf, President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Georgi Parvanov, President of the Republic of Bulgaria

The President: The Assembly will hear an address by the President of the Republic of Bulgaria.

Mr. Georgi Parvanov, President of the Republic of Bulgaria, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Georgi Parvanov, President of the Republic of Bulgaria, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Parvanov (*spoke in Bulgarian; interpretation into English provided by the delegation*): At the outset, let me congratulate you, Mr. President, on your election to this responsible position. Your vast political experience and diplomatic skills guarantee the successful discharge of your duties, on behalf of the United Nations cause and for the prestige of the friendly Czech Republic.

The events of the past year do not allow us to treat this session merely as a routine one; they give a more specific nature. It should go beyond the routine political declarations and should aim at achieving specific results. This session should address the unfinished tasks of the Millennium Declaration and the new challenges to international peace and security, primarily the fight against terrorism. The session should contribute to resolving the persistent problems

of underdevelopment, poverty and widespread disease throughout the world.

Unfortunately, regional crises and conflicts in different parts of the world continue to dominate the General Assembly agenda. Bulgaria has been closely following the situation in the Middle East, and it supports efforts to find fair and lasting solutions. We share the view that progress can be achieved only on the basis of dialogue and cooperation between the parties concerned and with the active engagement of the "quartet" in this process.

The situation in Afghanistan is still volatile. The Government needs comprehensive support to enhance internal stability and security and to rebuild the country. Therefore, Bulgaria has suggested that the external debt of Afghanistan be relieved in order to stimulate economic development of that country.

Iraq has been of a focus of attention of the United Nations for the past 12 years. The full implementation of Security Council resolutions concerning Iraq is of urgent importance. We expect Iraq to comply immediately and unconditionally with those resolutions. For its part, the Council must take actions that will uphold its authority and credibility as the single international body responsible for the maintenance of world peace and security. I concur with the views expressed thus far by Secretary-General Kofi Annan, President Bush and other previous speakers about the need to act decisively and without delay to adopt an effective, workable Security Council position on this issue.

Bulgaria has come to the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly with the added responsibility of a member of the Security Council. We are strongly committed to the principles of consensus, constructive dialogue and transparency in the work of the Council.

The fight against terrorism is a top international priority today. Yesterday's special meeting of the Security Council reaffirmed the validity of resolution 1373 (2001) and commended the work of the Counter-Terrorism Committee. The presidential statement, supported unanimously by the Council, reflects the political will for common action against terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. I would add that the fight against terrorism should not lead to persecution on religious or ethnic grounds nor infringe upon human rights.

Bulgaria is already a party to all international conventions against terrorism. Moreover, my country has made a substantial contribution to all international efforts by sending its contingent to Afghanistan.

Anti-terrorist efforts require a serious rethinking of current approaches to cooperation. We are aware that terrorism is often linked to other security threats, such as organized crime, drug trafficking, corruption, money-laundering and the illegal arms trade. Bulgaria has initiated and actively participated in a number of bilateral and regional cooperation arrangements on these issues. My country is increasingly effective in blocking one of the routes of drug trafficking towards Europe. We have adopted one of the most stringent laws on export controls over the arms trade and have been implementing a whole range of its provisions decisively.

Developments in South-Eastern Europe remain dynamic and volatile. Yet, for the first time in recent years it has been positive. I, for one, am optimistic that the legacy of conflict and confrontation could be surmounted at long last, and stability, peace and security can finally be established in the region. This process should be continued and made irreversible. All countries in South-Eastern Europe today share the same European perspective, and this is what gives me grounds for optimism. For Bulgaria, early membership in the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is a strategic priority enjoying wide public support.

During the years of crisis and post-crisis management in South-Eastern Europe, Bulgaria has shown the capacity and proved its ability to generate stability and security in the region. It continues to promote the effective and strict implementation of the Chemical Weapons and Biological Weapons Conventions. The uncontrolled proliferation of small arms is another source of terrorism. Furthermore, we strongly support the United Nations Programme of Action in this sphere.

International human rights protection should take place in the spirit of justice and equality, in line with the United Nations Charter and the principles of international law. The United Nations should be in a position to respond promptly and more effectively to any serious human rights violations. This is why we support the ongoing reforms in the monitoring mechanisms of the Commission on Human Rights.

Bulgaria believes that the internal security of any State lies in the exercise of all human rights by persons belonging to minorities within the State and is closely linked to the internal stability of that State. All individuals should enjoy their rights on the basis of non-discrimination and equality before the law. In this regard, we insist that the international community's efforts should be focused primarily on the implementation of existing standards.

Decisions should be taken to make the United Nations more effective in fulfilling its numerous responsibilities. Bulgaria supports the reform measures initiated by Secretary-General Kofi Annan. United Nations reform must continue and take into account in future the new political and economic realities. In particular, it must address the specific issues of sustainable development. I emphasize this point, because I am still under the influence of the Johannesburg World Summit, where my country once again confirmed its strong support to efforts targeted at the eradication of poverty and achieving sustainable patterns of production and consumption, as well as providing decent health care and education to the Earth's population.

Mr. President, I would like to assure you that Bulgaria regard the work of the United Nations with a great sense of responsibility. We stand ready to participate in the discussions and decision-making on all agenda items. The world today needs resoluteness and firmness in order to meet the new challenges to international peace, security and sustainable development. The United Nations offers the best framework for tackling these challenges. Bulgaria is willing and able to make its contribution to such international efforts.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Bulgaria for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Georgi Parvanov, President of the Republic of Bulgaria, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mrs. Vaira Vike-Freiberga, President of the Republic of Latvia

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Latvia.

Mrs. Vaira Vike-Freiberga, President of the Republic of Latvia, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the Republic of Latvia, Her Excellency Mrs. Vaira Vika-Freiberga, and to invite her to address the Assembly.

President Vike-Freiberga: I would like to begin by congratulating the Swiss Confederation on its recent accession to the United Nations Organization. Switzerland's immeasurable contribution to the work of the United Nations, even as a non-member, has been widely recognized and appreciated for decades. I am confident that Switzerland, in its new capacity as a Member State, will assume an even more significant role in United Nations activities, a role compatible with its new status.

Later this month the United Nations will greet another country, East Timor, as the newest member of the Organization. Like my own country, Latvia, which regained its independence only 11 years ago, East Timor will face the difficult challenges of consolidating its statehood and enhancing its economic development.

The United Nations and the international community can be proud that their concerted efforts to create a climate of peace and security on that island have met with success, and that the people of East Timor are now able to be the masters of their own destiny.

I would also like to express Latvia's continued solidarity and sympathy with the people of the United States, one year and one day after the horrifying terrorist attacks that changed the world forever. The courage and resilience displayed by the inhabitants of New York following the destruction of the World Trade Center has been truly remarkable, and the manner in which New Yorkers have coped with the aftermath of this tragedy has been an inspiration to us all. Today, as well as on the anniversary date itself, Latvians the world over are with the bereaved and with the people of the United States in our thoughts and in our prayers. We see the heinous crimes of 11 September not only as a contemptible act of aggression against the United States, but also as a direct and frontal assault against the civilized world as a whole.

The foundation of any civilized society rests on its deep-seated respect for the sanctity of human life. International terrorists hold human life in total and utter contempt. International terrorists specifically target civilian non-combatant populations, with the express goal of extinguishing as many human lives as possible. That is precisely what makes international terrorists so dangerous and so threatening.

Latvia, in collaboration with the United Nations, the European Union, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and all like-minded countries, is determined to do everything in its power to stem the growing threat of international terrorism. In the wake of the 11 September attacks, the Latvian Government has adopted an action plan that foresees Latvia's ratification of all international anti-terrorist conventions, as well as an increase in the capacity of Latvia's administrative, security, law enforcement and military structures. We are continuing to harmonize our national legislation according to international and European Union standards, and we are tightening our control of immigration and the flow of strategic goods. We are improving our air and border surveillance capabilities, updating our emergency response procedures and raising the public's preparedness for dealing with emergency situations.

I would like to express Latvia's concern at the fact that one of the Organization's Member States — Iraq — continues to ignore repeated calls by both the Security Council and the rest of the international community to allow United Nations weapons inspectors on its territory. This lack of good will and this manifest atmosphere of secrecy only serve to reinforce credible suspicions that that country is clandestinely seeking to produce nuclear, chemical, bacteriological and other weapons of mass destruction, in clear violation of Security Council resolutions. Latvia views such clandestine activities not only as destabilizing to the region, but also as a threat to world security. That is why Latvia believes that the United Nations and the rest of the international community must act deliberately and decisively to curb the continuing threat of weapons proliferation posed by Iraq.

Latvia congratulates the United States of America on the respect expressed by President George W. Bush for the United Nations as an institutions and on the commitment he expressed this morning to the principle of multilaterality that the United Nations embodies. We applaud the willingness of the United States to engage the international community, through the United Nations and through the Security Council, on the legitimate concerns of the United States with regard to containing and eliminating visible and defiant threats to peace and stability in the world.

Latvia realizes that in this globalized world of the twenty-first century, no nation can be an island unto itself. Several other alarming threats besides international terrorism and arms proliferation present such serious challenges to the human race that we can hope to address them only through concerted and long-term international cooperation. These pressing global issues include organized crime and illegal trafficking, the abuse and exploitation of women and children, endemic poverty and unemployment, drug addiction and disease, and environmental pollution.

The global ecological crisis that our planet is now experiencing has resulted from our own reckless disregard for the Earth that sustains us. If we do not radically curb the excessive amount of greenhouse gases and other pollutants that we produce every day, then we will continue to experience natural disasters and climate changes of increasing scope and frequency.

I am proud to note that Latvia ratified the Kyoto Protocol earlier this summer, and I share the hope of Secretary-General Kofi Annan that the recent World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg, will lead to an increased commitment to environmental protection by the countries Members of the United Nations. Latvia is pleased that target dates have now been set regarding safe drinking water, sanitation and permissible levels of harmful chemicals. Yet we must not allow ourselves to slip into complacency, as the goals that our countries set at Rio in 1992 at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development are still far from being reached. This past spring, Latvia established a sustainable development council, led by the country's Prime Minister. That council will establish plans for the sustainable economic, social and environmental development of the country, in conjunction with European Union policies.

Two years ago, the States Members of the United Nations adopted another series of far-reaching goals when they signed the Millennium Declaration on the reduction of poverty. Unfortunately, we cannot yet pride ourselves on having achieved notable progress in

that sphere. If the laudable goals of the Declaration are truly to be realized in practice, then the States Members of the United Nations will have to display a far greater degree of political will and practical commitment in implementing them.

The United Nations itself will need to increase its administrative capacity if it is to effectively cooperate with its Member States in realizing the goals of the Millennium Declaration. Thanks to the initiative of Secretary-General Kofi Annan, several improvements can already be seen in the work of the United Nations, particularly regarding the reform of peacekeeping operations and the level of collaboration among the Organization's own institutions.

Further improvements could still be made in the financial discipline of the Organization's Member States through the timely payment of membership dues and more rational use by Member States of United Nations services at United Nations conferences. Initiated reforms within the United Nations system itself must continue in order to put an end to the overlapping of functions and to prevent unnecessary competition among the Organization's various institutions. Sounder spending practices and reduced paperwork, along with a reduction in the number of meetings and conferences with overlapping themes, would all further increase the effectiveness of United Nations activities.

Despite certain deficiencies in the structure and work of the United Nations, the Organization has contributed tremendously to the economic and social development of numerous Member States, including my own country, Latvia. When Latvia regained its independence 11 years ago, it had to undergo a rapid transformation from an occupied nation with a repressive political system to a liberal parliamentary democracy that respects human rights and liberties, and it had to transform its closed and planned State-run economy to an open and free-market economy. Thanks to the hard work undertaken by Latvia's people and their commitment to implement difficult transition policies — as well as the dedicated support of the international community — Latvia now has one of the fastest-growing economies in Europe, along with a stable national currency and a low rate of inflation. Within a few months, Latvia hopes to receive official invitations to join the European Union and the NATO alliance.

Many of the positive changes that Latvia has experienced over the past decade have been actively supported by the United Nations, and particularly by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Latvia's new social security system, which is now one of the most modern in Europe, was implemented with direct UNDP participation. The UNDP and the Latvian Government are also cooperating in the implementation of minority integration programmes in our country. Latvia is still in the process of reforming its health and education systems and, like other countries in Europe, must confront the problem of an ageing population resulting from a falling birth rate, the number of deaths each year continuing to exceed the number of births.

Nevertheless I am proud to note that on 17 June last Latvia and UNDP signed a memorandum of understanding by which Latvia's status as a recipient of United Nations assistance was changed to that of a net contributor. Latvia sees its intellectual potential and its experience in the implementation of transition reforms as a national resource. We have now entered the phase of sharing this resource with other developing nations. During the past two years, Latvia, in cooperation with Canada and the European Union, has been providing technical assistance and expertise to Ukraine, Georgia and Croatia.

Latvia is convinced that the reduction of disparities in income and standards of living among the world's nations is essential for the consolidation of peace and security across the globe. That is why Latvia has liberalized its trade regime with 49 of the world's least developed countries, in accordance with the Doha development agenda. Within its means and through United Nations channels, Latvia has also provided humanitarian aid to war-torn areas in the Balkans and in Afghanistan.

Every nation, no matter how large or how small, is possessed of its own intrinsic, inalienable value. Every nation has its unique contribution to make to humanity as a whole. Let us remember this as we meet here today at this fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly. Together, our nations have many serious challenges to address. But I am confident that by uniting our experiencing and resources, we shall eventually succeed in reducing poverty, cleaning up our environment, controlling the spread of diseases, and making this world a safer and more secure place in which to live.

The United Nations Organization was created first and foremost to serve for the benefit of humanity. It was created as an instrument for propagating the fundamental principles of democracy, humanism, universality, mutual respect and understanding. Although the people and nations of the world are vastly diverse in their conditions of life and in their cultures, all human beings share the same basic needs and desires: access to the basic necessities of life, the possibility of growing and evolving as individuals, and the change to contribute to the growth and development of the countries that we each call home. As fellow inhabitants of our beautiful and fragile planet, let us pledge to commit our efforts to protect the physical equilibrium of the earth and to create a fairer social and economic equilibrium across the globe.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Latvia for statement she has just made.

Mrs. Vaira Vike-Freiberga, President of the Republic of Latvia, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Valdas Adamkus, President of the Republic of Lithuania

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Lithuania.

Mr. Valdas Adamkus, President of the Republic of Lithuania, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Valdas Adamkus, President of the Republic of Lithuania, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Adamkus: First of all, I would like to express my thanks to Mr. Han Seung-soo, President of the previous session of the General Assembly. We appreciated his skilful guidance and leadership. We wish you, Sir, as incoming President, a year of constructive dialogue and fruitful cooperation.

I also would like to take this opportunity to welcome Switzerland and East Timor, which are joining the United Nations family. This expansion of United Nations membership is very important. It is taking place at a time when the need for global solidarity and partnership is greater than ever before. Terrorism threatens global stability and the very basis of our lives. Our countries must stand united and act together in order to avert threats to our existence and secure the future of our children.

My country knows from experience how powerful and instrumental solidarity can be. Some years ago, Lithuania and eight other countries of Central and Eastern Europe formed an informal Vilnius Group, which has now grown to 10 members, to facilitate their accession to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Solidarity and mutual support are helping us to make these aspirations a reality that is within our grasps. We hope that our countries will soon join the European Union and NATO, thus reinforcing common values in the region as well as our common positions and actions in the face of future challenges and threats.

But political solidarity is not enough. Our countries have also launched regional initiatives and taken other concrete steps to increase contributions to the global campaign against terrorism. In particular, I would like to mention the conference against terrorism — a Polish initiative — that was held in Warsaw last November. Our countries are determined to act and cooperate further, thus strengthening European and global security.

In the face of common threats, solidarity must emerge as a consolidating driving force in global diplomacy. The tragedy of 11 September was an experience that reinforced and strengthened our common resolve to combat and counter terrorism. It should give us the courage and determination to work together as an international community in addressing the roots of terrorism; in responding decisively to non-compliance with Security Council resolutions and to gross violations of internationally recognized norms and behaviour; in fighting terror worldwide; and in keeping weapons of mass destruction out of the hands of terrorists.

It is regrettable, therefore, that a Member of this great body, the United Nations, does not uphold its commitments or the underlying principles of this Organization. The Iraqi regime must allow unrestricted access to United Nations inspectors so that they can resume their work. We should exert all possible pressure to ensure this. Indeed, this is a test case with respect to the international community's solidarity and unity.

Last but not least, I would like to underscore the importance of international and regional cooperation in non-proliferation and arms control. It has always been Lithuania's firm policy to take part in all relevant, effective and functional multilateral arms control and confidence-building regimes that are open to us and that correspond to our national security interests. This year, Lithuania has applied for membership in the Treaty on Open Skies. We will also seek to join the adapted Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe after it comes into force and is open to all European democracies.

Each and every State Member of the United Nations should make a positive contribution to international security and stability, first and foremost by respecting the rule of law and the human rights of its citizens. Good governance is a good starting point for all of us, irrespective of our cultural diversity or fundamental differences of history and geography.

President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who devoted much time to the planning of this multilateral institution known as the United Nations, once said, "We have learned that we cannot live alone, at peace; that our own well-being is dependent on the well-being of other nations far away." Thus, the real strength of our power as an international community continues to lie in the power of our resolve to deal with the critical issues. .

Yesterday in this great city of New York, we paid our respects to the victims of 11 September 2001. We admire the way the American people have gone through this tragedy, and we support the United States of America in its efforts to eliminate threats to international security and human freedom. Let us debate, talk things out and make full use of diplomatic measures. But we must be ready to act decisively when strategic realities demand defence of freedom and democracy.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Lithuania for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Valdas Adamkus, President of the Republic of Lithuania, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Rene R. Harris, M.P., President of the Republic of Nauru

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Nauru.

Mr. Rene R. Harris, M.P., President of the Republic of Nauru, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Rene R. Harris, M.P., President of the Republic of Nauru, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Harris: I bring warm greetings from the people of Nauru, who join me in congratulating you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly, and in commending the outgoing President for his strong leadership and guidance throughout the tumultuous year gone by.

My delegation takes this opportunity to congratulate Switzerland on becoming a full member of the United Nations, making it the 190th Member State in this brotherhood of nations.

Much of the work of the United Nations since the last session of the General Assembly is reflective of the state of the world. The events of 11 September 2001 and the ongoing conflicts around the world have focused the work of this body on security issues, and that is understandable. The Security Council's adoption of its resolution 1373 (2001), obligating Member States to implement anti-terrorism measures, has the full support of the countries of the Pacific Island Forum, of which we are a member.

At the international level, my Government is pleased with the outcome of the first session of the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, which concluded only a few days ago.

We commend with admiration the United Nations operation in East Timor for successfully nursing an occupied territory and its people from despair to nationhood, with the proclamation of an independent Democratic Republic of East Timor on 20 May this year.

The communiqué of the 33rd meeting of the Pacific Islands Forum, held in Fiji last month, sets out

wide-ranging concerns that impact the livelihood and welfare of the peoples of the Pacific. First and foremost among those concerns is the environment. The continued degradation of the Earth's environment cannot be ignored, in the light of the natural disasters that are occurring in different parts of the world: flooding, earthquakes and droughts, to name but a few. There is enough scientific evidence to show that the changes in the Earth's environment and climate are human-induced. The World Summit on Sustainable Development recently held in Johannesburg was an earnest attempt by us to remedy the situation.

All of us in the Pacific region were disappointed by the lack of meaningful targets in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. However, we believe that the commitments for significant new resources and partnerships reached at the Summit will go a long way in helping to accelerate implementation of sustainable development.

Nauru is very pleased by the assured entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol, thanks to the commitments made by India, Canada, Russia and China to ratify that instrument. But that is only the first step in what has to be a universal campaign to address climate change. We would therefore join the call for the United States and Australia to see their way clear, in the not-too-distant future, to ratifying the Protocol.

Another issue of special importance to Nauru is the health of our ocean. We are the custodians of the largest ocean, rich in natural marine resources and minerals. The ocean also frames our cultures and is the source of our future well-being. This is particularly true in the case of Nauru, which has a land area of only 10 square miles and an ocean area of at least 120,000 square miles. We use the ocean to provide desalinated water, and earn a substantial amount of our income from fishing license fees. For the sake of our future, the international users of our ocean space must work with us to conserve the ocean's natural resources against unsustainable use; protect its biodiversity from pollution, including through the shipment of toxic materials; and ensure that island countries benefit equitably from the trade in the ocean's natural resources, living or non-living.

Mr. Panou (Togo), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Just as the economies and the environment of Pacific Islanders are vulnerable to external forces, so is the security of our peoples and Governments. Our region, the world's very first nuclear-free zone, has a long history of supporting disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, born of the region's harsh experience with nuclear testing by colonial powers.

I joined other Pacific Leaders last month in expressing concern on the trans-shipment of nuclear waste through our waters. My delegation welcomes the initiative by Mongolia to institutionalize its territory as a nuclear weapon-free zone and will support United Nations action towards the realization of this goal.

On the domestic front, the potential fallout on our economy of the OECD initiative on harmful tax competition is worrisome, to say the least. While my Government reaffirms the sovereign right of nations to establish domestic tax regimes of their own design and choosing, we have expressed our strong commitment to developing a cooperative framework within which countries can work together to address transparency, capacity building and information exchange in relation to tax matters.

We remain of the view that the only place where money-laundering can be controlled effectively is at the source. While Nauru has done all it can to date to ensure that its legal and administrative system is sufficient to prevent such activities, we appear to remain the subject of adverse criticism from the Financial Action Task Force on Money-Laundering (FATF). Nauru was disappointed not to have graduated out of the special, non-cooperating countries list. We will, nonetheless, continue to work on satisfying the key players in FATF on this issue.

Two most pressing issues facing my Government in a "post-phosphate" future are energy and the supply of fresh water, as both have direct impacts on the standard of living of the community. Nauru is dependent on the import of fossil fuel for its entire energy requirement, including for the desalination of seawater to complement catchments of rainwater.

Before I conclude, Mr. President, I wish to reiterate Nauru's support for the reform of the United Nations Security Council, and to support calls for this issue to continue to receive top priority. In terms of the United Nations itself, the ongoing administrative and budgetary reforms by the Secretary-General are welcome, but much more certainly needs to be done.

Nauru is disappointed to see that contributions to the Global Health Fund are only trickling in, contrary to our enthusiastic undertaking at the Special Session last year. Consequently HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis continue unabated in their destruction of communities and continue to rob the manpower of affected nations. Nauru pledged to contribute $1 per head of its population to the Fund, and I am pleased to announce that this pledge has been honoured. I again call on all Member States, rich and poor, to contribute.

Finally, Mr. President, in the past two years the Millennium Summit and the Monterrey and Johannesburg Summits have illustrated the United Nations' increasing role as a forum for building consensus. Indeed, the last twelve months have been trying times in our efforts to build consensus on development and to maintain international peace and security. The challenge facing us in this area is not so much one of building consensus, because we all know what needs to be done, but rather one of implementation. Achieving our lofty goals requires action and cooperation at all levels, from local to global. Mr. President, we look to you for leadership in this decisive period and offer our steadfast support.

Finally, 11 September 2001 seems to be a way of life for some people. It is now etched into history and what a pity. The perpetrators cannot be proud of what happened, and we should not allow them or encourage them to proceed on their merry way. We must pursue the alternatives we have, as they can be a great legacy for our children. We the small nations have faith in the United Nations. We the small nations have hope in the United Nations. Let us embrace love in its entirety, for love is a beautiful way of living. Thank you. God bless the United Nations.

The Acting President *(spoke in French)*: On behalf of the Members of the General Assembly I wish to thank Mr. Rene Harris, the President of the Republic of Nauru for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Rene Harris, President of the Republic of Nauru, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Robert Mugabe, President Republic of Zimbabwe

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Zimbabwe.

Mr. Robert Mugabe, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, His Excellency Mr. Robert Mugabe, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Mugabe: I would like to congratulate Mr. Jan Kavan on his assumption of the presidency of the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session. I am confident that his leadership will successfully carry us through this session. We extend to his predecessor, Mr. Han Seung-soo, our sincere appreciation for the excellent manner in which he steered the work of the recently concluded fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

My delegation warmly welcomes Switzerland as a new Member of this family of nations. I would be remiss if I did not pay tribute to the United Nations for its role in ensuring the smooth transition of East Timor to statehood. We believe that the new nation will for some time continue to require the support of the international community in its efforts at nation-building. We look forward to welcoming East Timor into the United Nations in the near future.

Yesterday, the United States and, indeed, the whole world, commemorated the first anniversary of the horrific terrorist attacks on New York and Washington. Terrorism is a threat to international peace and security. No matter where it occurs, no matter whom it is directed at and no matter what form it takes, the scourge of terrorism must be condemned and dealt with decisively and in conformity with the ideals and principles of the United Nations Charter. The adoption of unilateral measures by some countries to combat terrorism not only is counterproductive but also undermines the mandate and effectiveness of the United Nations. In dealing with this scourge, the world community needs to focus on identifying and addressing its root causes, such as poverty, the denial of fundamental freedoms and the absence of social justice.

The United Nations is confronted with a volatile situation in the Middle East that has the potential to engulf the entire subregion. The Palestinian question should be resolved without further delay, as it is causing untold suffering to the people in the occupied

territories. Israel must withdraw its forces from Palestinian lands, and the Palestinians must be afforded the opportunity of having a State of their own. The carnage that is going on at present will benefit neither side. Israel must know that its chances for peace and security lie in having a Palestinian State that will live side by side with it in mutual respect between sovereign States.

We believe that Palestinians should be left alone to elect the leaders of their choice, as it is their democratic and sovereign right to do. It is only leaders thus elected who can ensure peace and stability within the State of Palestine and between Palestine and all of its neighbours. We note with concern that some countries wish to arrogate to themselves the right to choose or impose leadership in developing countries by sidelining or overthrowing democratically elected Governments. Not only is this a negation of democracy and democratic principles, but it constitutes outright interference in the internal affairs of independent sovereign States, and must be resisted. I say this in relation not only to other States but also to my own country. My people elected me, and that election was held to have been valid by Africa and its organizations. But Europe said, "No" — and it was Europe that yesterday was our oppressor and colonialist. Europe said "No", but Africa said, "Yes". To whom do we listen? The whites in Europe or the blacks in Africa? We listen to our own blacks and their judgement; they are our people. They, and no one else, are the ones who should elect us.

Zimbabwe welcomes the emergence of peace in Angola — a fellow member of the Southern African Development Community — and urges both sides to the conflict to remain committed to the Memorandum of Understanding signed earlier this year. The international community should urgently assist that country in consolidating the peace, and move on with the reconstruction and rehabilitation process. This is a small price to pay in order to give the people of Angola the peace that has eluded them since the 1950s.

We are also pleased that the peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is moving in the right direction. We would like to recognize the efforts of the Government of South Africa and the United Nations in this regard and to call on the United Nations to take strong measures against those who violate the agreed ceasefire.

Let me take this opportunity to announce once again that, in view of these positive developments, Zimbabwe is in the process of withdrawing its remaining forces from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We hope, however, that the Security Council will act boldly and without favour in ensuring that peace is consolidated in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and that it will immediately proceed with the full deployment of the third phase of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

In the same vein, we note that the mandate of the Expert Panel on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth in the Democratic Republic of the Congo expires in December 2002. It is our fervent hope that this time the Panel will have the courage to fully expose the economic agenda of the countries that invaded the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

We are gathered here to chart the way forward towards the creation of a world fit for all of us, to the turn of the century and beyond. We are meeting against the backdrop of the crucial summits that were held this year, during which landmark decisions were made regarding sustainable global economic and social development. Among these were the Monterrey International Conference on Financing for Development, and the recently concluded World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg, South Africa. It is our hope that the decisions of these conferences will be translated into meaningful cooperation among development partners. In this context, we welcome the pledges made for increased development aid and the commitment to sustainable development, which are essential for future generations.

Unfortunately, the World Summit on Sustainable Development demonstrated beyond doubt the unwillingness on the part of some developed countries to commit themselves more meaningfully to these international undertakings. They preferred instead to hide behind hackneyed and spurious conditionalities which all but oppose and negate the practice of democracy, good governance and respect for human rights in the developing world. While we all cherish these values, we are dismayed that they are increasingly being used by developed countries that have checkered democratic credentials and poor human rights records in order to settle political scores and to

forestall the economic development of countries whose Governments they do not like. When we see these same countries propping up regimes that are blatantly undemocratic, we cannot but conclude that this wilful commingling of issues is just an excuse for doing nothing about legitimate demands that the development aspirations of developing countries be addressed. The United Nations General Assembly should express its deep dismay at such dishonest attempts on the part of those countries and call upon them to stop the abuse of international agreements and shared values and the imposition of their interests upon other, often smaller nations.

We call for improved global governance through the democratization of multilateral organizations, such as the United Nations, the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization. There is also need for coherence in global policy-making. In the same vein, the management of the globalization process should not be left to market forces alone but should be regulated in a way that gives it a humane face and reverses the marginalization of developing countries.

In the area of world trade, we call for a level playing field in agenda setting and rule making in the World Trade Organization. We also need to see greater market-access opportunities for goods of export interest to developing countries in developed country markets, as well as greater willingness to address issues of commodity pricing. In addition, we call for the removal of agricultural subsidies, which have depressed the competitiveness of products from developing countries and inhibited their entry into the lucrative markets of the North. In the same vein, my delegation also calls for the immediate cancellation of the debt of poor countries, so that debt-service funds, which are crippling the development efforts of developing nations, can be used to improve the situation of those countries.

The special session on children, which was held here in New York in May of this year, did much to bring to the fore the need to address, in a meaningful way, the rights and development needs of children, with a view to enabling them to play their respective roles in society. The United Nations should continue to articulate those needs and foster the creation of a world fit for children.

Since the attainment of independence in 1980, Zimbabwe has made tremendous progress in the provision of schools and health-care facilities to improve the quality of life of its children. Regrettably, these gains were later to be reversed, as the Bretton Woods institutions demanded that we deprioritize education, health and social welfare in our resource allocations. Even without the support of those institutions, we have continued, within our limited means, to place primary importance on the development of the Zimbabwean child and the welfare of the underprivileged, thereby raising the literacy rate in our society to 87 per cent.

Zimbabwe and other countries in Southern Africa are grappling with the effects of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Our own efforts at combating the scourge are not enough, and they need to be augmented by the positive contribution of those countries that have the requisite financial resources and technological know-how.

We continue to call on the international community and private companies to hasten their efforts at finding an answer to this pandemic, which is ravaging our populations and economies. Affordable but effective drugs need to be made available, while support should be given to care givers helping those who suffer from the disease. Special assistance should be given to the growing number of children orphaned by the pandemic. We hope that the fund set up at last year's General Assembly special session on HIV/AIDS will receive the urgent and meaningful support that it deserves.

As you are aware, my country and most parts of Southern Africa, are currently experiencing a humanitarian crisis as a result of the drought that hit during the main cereal-producing season earlier this year. We commend the efforts being made by international organizations and the donor community to provide urgent food and non-food aid to our communities. We particularly wish to mention the efforts of United Nations agencies in this regard. We also welcome additional assistance in programmes that will mitigate the effects of future droughts.

Finally, my delegation is happy to inform you that Zimbabwe has concluded the fast-track land-redistribution programme that we introduced in July 2000 in order to transfer land to the hitherto landless black majority. It will be recalled that we had to face vehement protestations, bad publicity and misinformation from those who did not wish us well.

We remained resolute in the face of powerful forces determined to preserve vestiges of colonial privilege.

The primary objective of our agrarian reforms has been to redress the colonial injustice perpetrated by Britain, whereby a minority of British settlers in 1890 seized our land and acquired our natural resources but never paid any compensation to our ancestors.

By assuming its independence in 1980, Zimbabwe discarded the colonial yoke for all time and, therefore, will never brook any interference in its domestic affairs by any foreign Power. I appeal to this General Assembly to convey to Britain and especially to its current Prime Minister, Mr. Tony Blair, that Zimbabwe ceased to be a British colony in 1980 after Prince Charles, on behalf of the Government of the United Kingdom, gracefully lowered the British flag, called the "Union Jack". He should also be informed that the people of Zimbabwe waged an armed revolutionary struggle for their independence and stand ready to defend it in the same way. We want to be left in peace to carry out our just reforms and development plans, as we peacefully interact and cooperate with other countries within the region, the African continent and the international community. We refuse to be an extension of Europe. We are Africans and shall remain so forever. I wish the 57th session of the General Assembly every success.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Zimbabwe for his statement.

Mr. Robert G. Mugabe, President of Zimbabwe, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Agenda item 9 (*continued*)

General debate

Address by Mr. Anders Fogh Rasmussen, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Denmark

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Anders Fogh Rasmussen, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Denmark.

Mr. Anders Fogh Rasmussen, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Denmark, was escorted to the rostrum.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): I have great pleasure in welcoming His Excellency Mr. Anders Fogh Rasmussen, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Denmark, and inviting him to address the General Assembly.

Mr. Rasmussen (Denmark): On behalf of the European Union, I am honoured to address the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session.

A year ago today, the world woke up to a terrible new reality; but it was also a wake-up call for us to join forces and present a solid front against the perpetrators of terror, the enemies of freedom. Not so far from here, at the heart of New York's pulsating business community, the twin towers used to stand, representing the pride of all New Yorkers in their city. But now, they have been replaced by a gaping hole, a memento of that fateful September day when terror reared its ugly head and, for a while, the very pulse of this city seemed to stop. For on that day, terror came to America, leaving in its wake death and destruction and thousands upon thousands of sorrowing mourners.

It was the moment which marked the division of our world into civilized nations and those that use terror as their weapon; but it was also the day which saw us take a stand against evil. It was the day when we decided to stand shoulder to shoulder in a worldwide coalition against these men of terror and their cowardly acts.

And, when the call for action came, it was here, within these walls at the United Nations, that we met to give each other renewed hope and confidence. It was as natural as it was necessary, because the attack was directed against the very foundation of this Organization, planned by cowards in their lairs conspiring against world peace and security, launched by fanatics violating every basic law of humanity, and supported by tyranny oppressing liberty and equality. For make no mistake, these acts of terrorism have not weakened us; they have only served to strengthen our resolve to actively seek security and prosperity for all consistent with the United Nations Charter and international law. And, from the outset, the United Nations has played a crucial role in the fight against terrorism.

On our part in the European Union, there could be no hesitation. Our way was and is clear. We fully support the initiatives of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Committee because we will never allow

terror and fear to obscure freedom and democracy. The European Union therefore intends actively to assist other nations in implementing Security Council resolution 1373 (2001). The European Union remains committed to finalizing and adopting the comprehensive convention against terrorism and we therefore strongly urge all Member States to join and implement the 12 United Nations conventions on terrorism.

The key role played by the United Nations in the fight against terrorism is a reminder of the fact that the United Nations itself was born out of hope founded on the ashes of the Second World War — a war which defeated tyranny and terror. With the adoption of the Millennium Declaration, the United Nations has been given renewed impetus to deal globally with conflict prevention, crisis management, humanitarian assistance, post-conflict rehabilitation and development, and disarmament and arms control. In the complicated area of peacemaking, the United Nations and the European Union work tirelessly to find solutions in the Middle East through the efforts of the Quartet and in finding a permanent settlement on Cyprus consistent with the relevant Security Council resolutions. The European Union is a major partner in the rebuilding of a new Afghanistan freed from terror.

In the Middle East, Iraq remains a major source of concern with regard to weapons of mass destruction, as President Bush emphasised in his important statement this morning. Iraq must grant unconditional and unimpeded access for the weapons inspectors to Iraq and the required cooperation from its authorities to the inspectors. Iraq is in breach of several resolutions of the Security Council on its disarmament obligations. These obligations must be complied with immediately. The European Union is determined to support further efforts of the United Nations to that end. We agree with the United States that this matter should urgently be dealt with by the Security Council and we agree with the Secretary-General that, if Iraq's defiance continues, the Security Council must face up to its responsibilities.

The European Union, conscious of its obligations, remains strongly engaged in United Nations-mandated operations throughout the world, from holding in check the civil war in Sierra Leone to building a secure, prosperous and democratic Kosovo. We also strongly support the initiatives to strengthen the United Nations future peacekeeping capacity. We owe it to our armed forces to ensure an efficient and robust framework for future operations.

But we must not forget that at the heart of all these conflicts are human beings, who are sometimes struggling to achieve what we take for granted. For human rights are fundamental to the lives and dignity of all human beings. The primary, fundamental and essential accomplishment of the United Nations will one day be the full enjoyment of all human rights by everyone everywhere: the right of each individual to feel that life, body and property are hers or his alone and to feel safe and secure; the right of each individual to face authorities without fear of injustice or harassment; and the right of each individual to learn that people can speak up for themselves with confidence and without having to fear the consequences.

Human rights are also fundamental to human prosperity and development. The European Union therefore strongly supports the efforts of the Secretary-General to integrate human rights into all United Nations activities.

Sadly, cruelty toward the defenceless, violence, maltreatment and torture remain widespread. The European Union strongly supports the adoption of the draft optional protocol to the United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

The European Union also advocates universal abolition of the death penalty. No State should grant itself the right to take life. Where the death penalty still exists, we call for its use to be progressively restricted. We would like to see all nations introduce a moratorium on this form of punishment and, eventually, to end it altogether, so that it will become a thing of the past.

Until women are in possession of all human rights and are able to take charge of their lives and to achieve their full potential, sustainable development will remain but a dream. The European Union remains committed to fighting all forms of discrimination and violence against women, including murder and mutilation through a misguided sense of honour. By the same token, we vigorously pursue the global fight against racism, discrimination and intolerance. These deplorable attitudes and actions are regrettably still part of everyday life throughout the world. They do not belong here at the doorstep of the new millennium.

People do not need revenge; they want justice. They do not wish for impunity; they want accountability. That is what the International Criminal Court (ICC) is about. We now have a permanent international court that can bring those accused of war crimes and other perpetrators of the most serious crimes of international concern to trial. The European Union supports the ICC as an important historic milestone. It reflects a new level of international cooperation. We are confident that the ICC will contribute to strengthening respect for international humanitarian law and human rights. The European Union expresses its strong hope that countries that at present have reservations about the Statute will join as soon as possible. We believe that the Court will prove to be an effective, competent and fair legal instrument.

Ridding the world of persistent poverty remains the greatest global challenge of all. We have achieved significant results in the fight against poverty and misery, but the world community still has far to go if we are to meet the goals of the Millennium Declaration.

For many countries, the United Nations is first and foremost about combating poverty. How can we assure everyone access to the essentials of life? The next meal, medicine and health care to survive and access to basic education: these are the promises contained in the Millennium Declaration, and we must not let the world down.

Aid alone will not eliminate poverty. We know that. Developing countries can take their cue from African leaders, who have taken an impressive lead with the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). This year has seen many decisive steps taken within the fields of trade and development, finance and sustainable development. At Doha, Monterrey and Johannesburg, we reached consensus on what needs to be done. But knowing what has to be done is not enough. As world leaders, we must see that it is done.

The European Union played a key role in reaching this consensus and is therefore committed to this new agenda. We have decided to further open our markets to exports from the least developed countries. We hope that others will follow the same path.

Translating policies on poverty eradication into sustainable development requires strong political will and true partnership in development. A major challenge now will be to turn the Monterrey Consensus and the outcome of Johannesburg into reality. The European Union proposes that the United Nations system monitor implementation of the Johannesburg targets and agenda. These and other important United Nations policy issues are spelled out in the European Union position paper.

On behalf of the European Union, I am happy to welcome the decisions of Switzerland and East Timor to join the United Nations. Two nations — one old and one new, one in the North and one in the South: they reflect the multitude and the diversity of the United Nations.

At the special session of the General Assembly on children, young people from all over the world illustrated their dream of a world of peace and unity using all the colours of the flags of the Members of the United Nations.

But we should not content ourselves with a dream. From the war against international terrorism, through the quest for justice, to the relentless fight against poverty, we need a strong and efficient United Nations. The Declaration on the Rights of the Child says that "mankind owes to the child the best it has to give" (*resolution 1386 (XIV), preamble*). What better gift can we give children than unity among our nations?

Let us seize the moment and take another step towards a true United Nations, united in word and in deed.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Denmark for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Anders Fogh Rasmussen, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Denmark, was escorted from the rostrum.

The meeting rose at 1.40 p.m.